

GEORGE A. ROMERO

4R MARVEL

# EMPIRE<sup>TM</sup> #1 OF THE DEAD

ILLUSTRATED BY  
ALEX MALEEV

**PARENTAL  
ADVISORY!  
NOT FOR KIDS!**



FIVE YEARS AFTER THE DEAD FIRST WALKED...  
THE GREATEST CITY IN THE EMPIRE STATE BECAME AN...  
EMPIRE OF THE DEAD

*Welcome to*

# New York

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THE EMPIRE STATE  
OF THE DEAD

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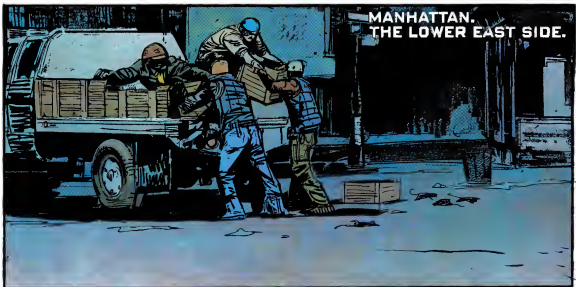
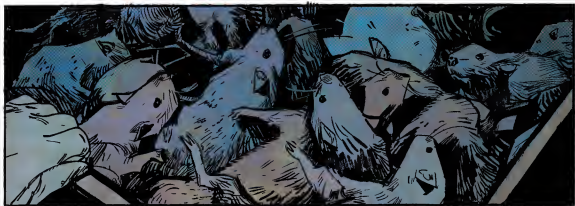
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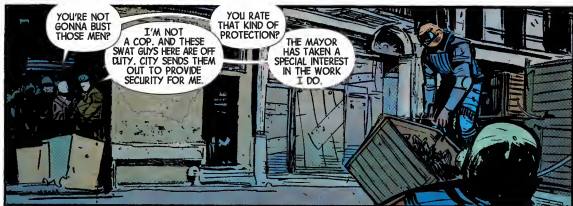
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SPECIAL THANKS TO JORGE ZAFFINO, WHOSE ART  
INFLUENCED MY APPROACH ON THIS BOOK. - ALEX MALEEV

When you see this:  , open up the MARVEL AR APP (available on applicable Apple © iOS or Android™ devices) and use your camera-enabled device to unlock extra-special exclusive features!







YOU'RE NOT  
GONNA BUST  
THOSE MEN?

I'M NOT  
A COP, AND THESE  
SWAT GUYS HERE ARE OFF  
DUTY. CITY SENDS THEM  
OUT TO PROVIDE  
SECURITY FOR ME.

YOU RATE  
THAT KIND OF  
PROTECTION?

THE MAYOR  
HAS TAKEN A  
SPECIAL INTEREST  
IN THE WORK  
I DO.



WHO SENT  
YOU  
OUT?

COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY. I'M  
A DOCTOR. HERE  
TO STUDY—

—THE *STINKERS*,  
RIGHT? THE LIVING  
DEAD. SEE IF YOU  
CAN FIND A WAY  
TO TAME THEM.



ACTUALLY,  
I'M HERE TO  
STUDY *YOU*. YOU  
HAVE TAMED  
THEM.



NO. I DON'T  
WANT 'EM TO  
BE TAMED.

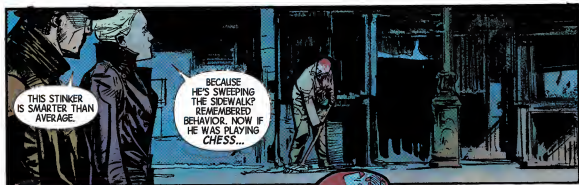
THE ONES I  
PICK ARE GOING INTO  
THE ARENA AT THE CIRCUS  
MAXIMUS. I WANT 'EM TO  
REMAIN JUST AS BRUTAL AS THEY  
ARE WHEN I FIND 'EM OUT  
HERE ON THE STREET. ALL I'M  
LOOKING FOR IS A SPARK  
OF INTELLIGENCE...

IT'S NOT  
*INTELLIGENCE*.  
EVEN IN THE BEST OF THEM.  
IT'S REMEMBERED BEHAVIOR.  
EVERYTHING THEY DO, EVERYTHING  
THEY'RE EVEN *CAPABLE* OF  
DOING, COMES FROM SOME  
DEEPLY RETAINED MEMORY.



HOW  
MANY PEOPLE DO  
YOU THINK RETAIN  
MEMORIES OF EATING  
HUMAN FLESH?





**BATTERY PARK.**

YOU SAID  
THEY COULDN'T  
DO THAT.

I SAID THEY  
COULDN'T PLAY  
CHESS. THAT'S ONLY  
CHECKERS.

THAT  
MAN—WHO  
IS HE?

WHAT  
MAN?

THERE  
WAS A MAN  
STANDING  
THERE, A  
SWAT  
OFFICER...

WE CAME  
WITH TWELVE,  
WE'RE LEAVIN'  
WITH TWELVE.

LOST AN OFFICER DOWN  
HERE A COUPLE WEEKS AGO.  
GOT BIT BY A STINKER.  
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO SHOOT  
'EM WHEN THAT HAPPENS,  
BUT THIS ONE GOT  
AWAY.


MAYBE  
THAT'S WHO  
I SAW.

NAH. ANYONE  
LEFT DOWN HERE  
WOULD BE HAMBURGER.  
BY NOW, UNLESS SHE  
HAD AMAZING  
SURVIVAL SKILLS.

SHE?

THE ONE  
WE LOST WAS A  
WOMAN. NAME  
WAS XAVIER.  
FRANCES XAVIER.

WE USED  
TO CALL  
HER "X."



"COME ON. WE'VE GOT  
A TRAIN TO CATCH!"



PRETTY NICE, HUH?  
NO STOPS. DIRECT  
FLIGHT UP TO SIXTY-  
SIXTH STREET.

YOU'RE  
LUCKY TO BE  
ONE OF 'EM.

WHERE  
THE FANCY  
FOLKS LIVE.

LUCKY  
TO BE ALIVE.  
YOU, TOO.



BUT WHAT SORT  
OF FUTURE CAN  
WE EXPECT?

WHAT DID  
WE HAVE BEFORE?  
SEX WHEN WE COULD  
GET IT. GLASS OF BEER  
WHEN WE COULD  
AFFORD IT.



WE HAD **HOPE**.  
HOPE IS WHAT'S  
BEEN TAKEN AWAY  
FROM US.

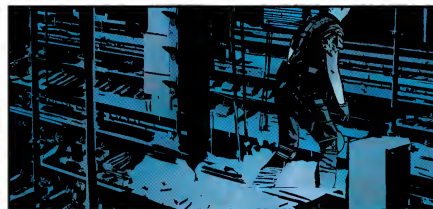
I STILL HAVE  
HOPE, FOR A  
COLD BEER THIS  
EVENING...

...AND MAYBE  
SOME GOOD SEX  
AFTERWARDS.



I'LL BUY  
YOU A BEER  
SOME TIME. BUT  
I WOULDN'T  
HOPE FOR MUCH  
MORE.





IM NOT HURT.  
NEVER DEAD.  
I'M STILL LIVING- DEAD.



ADAM NOT FINISHED.  
CUTTING HIM OFF STILL NOT  
HAVE BEEN HIS WORK  
TO DO. KOTEN



CENTRAL PARK.

AR

WHAT TIME  
DO THE GAMES  
BEGIN?

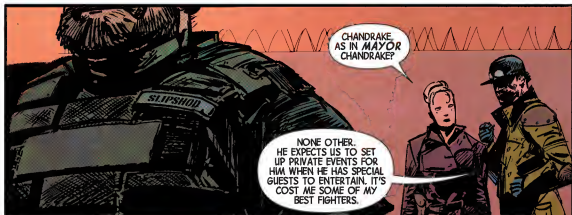
CENTRAL PARK ZOO.

ARENA OPENS AT NINE.  
WE OFFER A NUMBER OF  
BASIC ENTERTAINMENTS FOR  
EARLYBIRDS, SO...LOTS OF  
PEOPLE COME EARLY.

ZANZIBAR

ZANZIBAR'S  
MY MAIN MAN.  
SURVIVED DOZENS OF  
FIGHTS. HARDLY NEEDED  
ANY TRAINING. JUST  
NATURALLY AGGRESSIVE,  
I GUESS.







THIS IS LIKE  
A SCHOOL. AN  
ACADEMY OF  
THE DEAD.

HOW MUCH  
SCHOOLING DID  
YOU HAVE?

MADE IT  
THROUGH NINTH.  
BARELY.

NOTHING  
AFTER  
THAT?

YOU  
THINK I'M DOING  
THIS BECAUSE  
I DON'T HAVE THE  
EDUCATION TO DO  
ANYTHING ELSE.  
NOT TRUE.



I'M A  
HUNTER--



--BECAUSE  
I DON'T  
WANT TO BE  
PREY!



SCARY,  
ISN'T IT?  
ISN'T  
IT?



I SAW MY FATHER  
TORN APART BY ONE  
OF THESE STINKERS. I  
DON'T WANT TO SEE  
ANYTHING LIKE THAT  
EVER AGAIN.

BUT  
YOU'VE PUT  
YOURSELF SMACK  
IN THE MIDDLE  
OF ZOMBIE  
HELL!



BEST PLACE  
TO BE. IN THE  
MIDDLE...







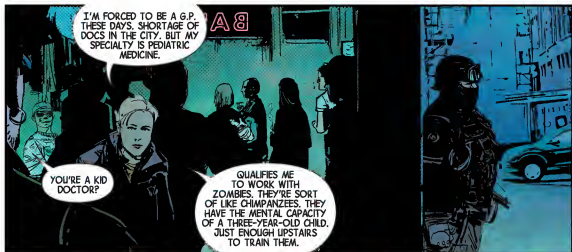


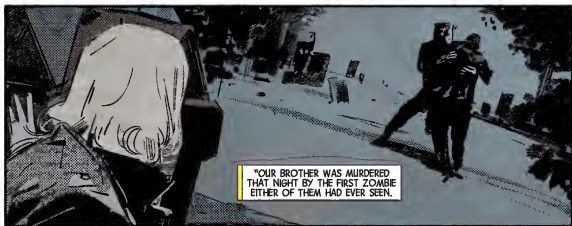
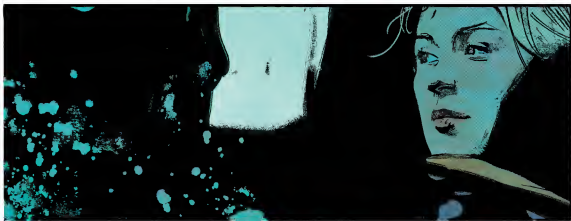












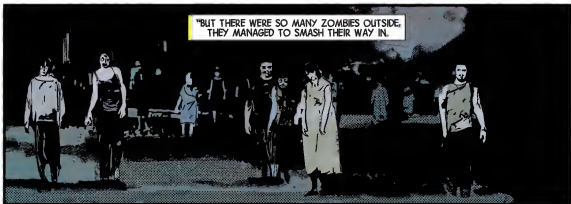
"MY SISTER MADE IT TO  
AN OLD FARMHOUSE,  
WHERE SHE FOUND SIX  
OTHER PEOPLE ALIVE.



"THEY REINFORCED THE WINDOWS  
AND DOORS. THEY MANAGED TO  
STAY SAFE FOR SEVERAL HOURS.



"BUT THERE WERE SO MANY ZOMBIES OUTSIDE,  
THEY MANAGED TO SMASH THEIR WAY IN.



"MY BROTHER  
WAS AMONG THE  
DEAD BY THEN.



"HE DRAGGED MY SISTER  
OUT OF THE HOUSE.  
EVERYONE BELIEVED HE  
WAS GOING TO KILL HER.






"HE DRAGGED HER  
INTO AN ABANDONED  
BARN AND WAS ABOUT  
TO ATTACK HER.



"THEN SUDDENLY,  
HE SEEMED TO  
RECOGNIZE WHO  
SHE WAS.



"YOU KNOW ME,  
DON'T YOU," SHE  
SAID. "I CAN TELL."



"THEN THE SHERIFF CAME WITH AN  
ARMED BAND OF LOCAL VIGILANTES.  
THEY COULD SEE MY SISTER IN  
THE OPEN DOORWAY OF THE BARN.

"'HERE', SHE CALLED  
OUT. 'OVER HERE!'"





"THEY AIMED THEIR GUNS AT HER."



"NO, DON'T SHOOT!" SHE PLEADED. BUT THEY'D BEEN HUNTING ZOMBIES ALL NIGHT AND THEY WERE TRIGGER-HAPPY. THEY OPENED FIRE."



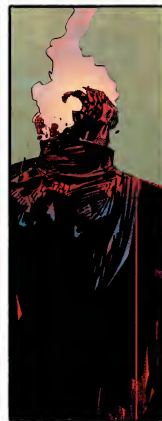
MY BROTHER PUSHED HER ASIDE AND STEPPED IN FRONT OF HER. HE WAS SHOT TO RIBBONS. ONE BULLET GOT HIM IN THE HEAD. THAT'S WHAT FINISHED HIM.

HE SAVED MY SISTER. HE RECOGNIZED WHO SHE WAS AND HE SAVED HER LIFE.

THAT'S WHY I HAVE FAITH.



I DON'T. I CAN'T! MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE I'M AROUND THEM SO MUCH. I SEE THEM FOR WHAT THEY ARE... **PREDATORS.** HUNGRY. DANGEROUS.





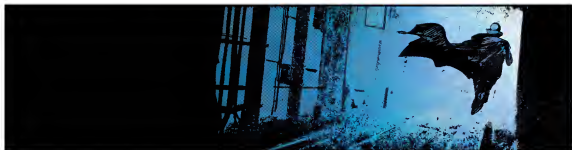
UNDERGROUND.











YOU'RE SCARED, AREN'T YOU?

IT'S OKAY TO ADMIT IT. THIS IS A FRIGHTENING WORLD WE LIVE IN – SOCIETAL BREAKDOWN, OUTBREAKS OF DRUG-RESISTANT DISEASES, DISAPPEARING RESOURCES, CLASS WARFARE DUE TO THE EVER-WIDENING INCOME GAP – WHATEVER'S YOUR POISON, YOU CAN READ ALL ABOUT IT AT NUMEROUS NEWS WEBSITES, AND ALSO IN THE PAGES OF THIS SERIES.

AS ANY FAN WORTH THEIR SALT WILL TELL YOU, STORIES STARRING THE UNDEAD ARE NOT JUST ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE ON THE SURFACE. YES, SCRATCH JUST BENEATH ITS ROTTED FLESH AND YOU'LL SEE THAT THIS UNSTOPPABLE GENRE CAN BE USED BY GOOD STORYTELLERS FOR INSIGHTFUL SOCIAL COMMENTARY. AND FILM DIRECTOR, SCREENWRITER, EDITOR AND LIVING LEGEND GEORGE ROMERO...WELL, YOU DON'T NEED ME TO TELL YOU THAT HE'S A MASTER STORYTELLER. WITHOUT HIS TRAIL - BLAZING WORK, WE WOULDN'T HAVE THE ZOMBIE GENRE AT ALL, WOULD WE?

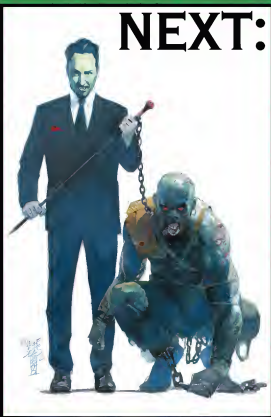
NOW GEORGE HAS RETURNED TO A MEDIUM THAT HE LOVES TO SHOW US ALL HOW IT'S DONE, AND LIKE ANY GOOD UNDEAD INVASION, HE'S NOT ALONE. WATCHING OVER OUR NIGHTMARISH DREAM TEAM LIKE MAYOR CHANDRAKE HIMSELF ARE GEORGE'S CREATIVE PARTNER, PETER GRUNWALD, AND OUR VERY OWN EDITOR IN CHIEF AXEL ALONSO, WHO HAVE OFFERED HOURS OF GRUESOME GUIDANCE.

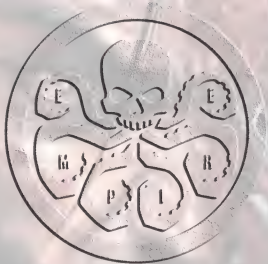
BRINGING THIS UNDEAD EPIC TO THRILLING LIFE IS THE AWARD-WINNING MURDERERS' ROW OF CREATORS INCLUDING THE AMAZING ARTIST ALEX MALEEV, COLOSSAL COLORIST MATT HOLLINGSWORTH AND LETHAL LETTERER CORY PETIT, WHO ARE ALL POURING THEIR BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS INTO EACH AND EVERY PANEL.

SPEAKING OF SPILLED FLUIDS, HOWABOUT THE DISCOVERY THAT VAMPIRES HAVE INFESTED THE BIG APPLE AS WELL? WHO WILL WIN IN THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE BLOOD-SUCKERS AND THE FLESH EATERS? AND WHAT ABOUT US POOR HUMANS CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE? SEE YOU HERE NEXT ISSUE AS WE ALL BEGIN TO DISCOVER THE ANSWERS TO THOSE CREEPY QUESTIONS. TALK ABOUT SCARY TIMES...

YOUR MAN @ MARVEL,  
BILL ROSEMAN

**NEXT:**





WALKER

